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To: Blum, Marty; Barnwell, Brian B.; Falcone, Iya; Horton, Roger; House, Grant; Schneider, Helene; Williams, Das

Cc: Alcazar, Brenda; Rodriguez, Cyndi

Subject: Appointments, Planning Commission and Architectural Board of Review

Mayor Blum and Councilmembers

I will not be able to appear before the City Council this year because I am in Asia and have been outside of the country for almost one month. I am submitting this e-mail to you in lieu of a personal appearance.

Deputy City Clerk Brenda Alcazar sent me some questions that I should address in my verbal presentation and they will be addressed in this e-mail below my signature (For your convenience, I have attached a copy of the text in this e-mail.)

Thank you for your consideration.

Jim Kahan

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Last year, I applied for appointment to the Planning Commission and made a verbal presentation to the City Council on November 21, 2006. I subsequently applied for appointment to the Architectural Board of Review and made a verbal presentation to the City Council on February 27, 2007. It was recognized that I was qualified under two categories - professional qualifications and lay member. It is my understanding that my previous application for appointment to the Architectural Board of Review will be considered again because it was filed less than one year ago, but it was necessary for me to apply again for appointment to the Planning Commission.

1. WILLING AND ABLE TO DEVOTE NECESSARY TIME - I am willing and able to devote the necessary time to serve if appointed to either the Planning Commission or Architectural Board of Review.

2. KNOWLEDGE OF PLANNING COMMISSION & ARCHITECTURAL BOARD OF REVIEW - When I worked for the City, I was a legal advisor to the Planning Commission and Architectural Board of Review. Since then, I have appeared before both the Planning Commission and ABR on numerous occasions. I know most of their members and I believe that I have a good working relationship with them.

3. EXPERIENCE AND SKILLS - I know the many local laws, regulations and guidelines under which the Planning Commission and ABR are organized and operate. I also understand and know many of the applicable state and federal laws, regulations and guidelines. As an undergraduate, I majored in Political Science with an emphasis in public administration and municipal planning. Prior to deciding to become a lawyer, I wanted to be an architect and I have continued my interest in both architecture and planning. I am conversant with building codes and have given courses in building code adoption and code enforcement.

4. REASONS FOR APPOINTMENT - I want to be appointed to the Planning Commission and Architectural Board of Review because I strongly believe in preserving the quality of life in Santa Barbara and I believe that I Street area can be effective on either the Planning Commission or ABR. I live in the Outer State Street area. In addition to bringing geographic diversity to the Planning Commission and Architectural Board of Review, I would add diversity in many other ways. I also want to stress that I have no financial or other interest in serving on either the Planning Commission or ABR. My only interest is what is best for Santa Barbara.

5. SPECIAL INTERESTS & ISSUES - I am very interested in preserving the quality of life in Santa Barbara, living within our natural resources, historic preservation, air and environmental quality, improving handicapped access and mobility, sustainability and green construction. We must recognize that we live within a relatively isolated narrow coastal plain with very limited resources. We all remember when the roads to Ventura and Ojai, at Gaviota and over San Marcos pass were blocked and the airport was not useable because of flooding. In addition to limited access, our road system is very narrow with limited arterial roadways. Water has always been an important issue in Santa Barbara. I do not want to see any more development which adversely impacts Santa Barbara.

6. EXPERIENCE READING PLANS & KNOWLEDGE OF CITY'S DESIGN/LAND USE POLICIES - I am very conversant with and know how to read architectural, engineering and landscape plans. I started working with plans when I was a teenager and I have worked in and with the construction industry since that time. I have litigated construction matters where it was necessary for me to interpret plans, specifications and surveys. I work with and interpret plans so regularly that I keep both architect's and engineer's rulers and scales in the top drawer of my desk.

I am very familiar with the City's Land Use/Design Policies and I have applied them to a variety of projects. Unfortunately, the City staff has not always followed these policies.

7. CURRENT LAND USE ISSUES FACING CITY - There are many current issues facing the City. Living within our resources, traffic and water issues pervade almost every development that is considered by the City. The update of the General Plan will continue to be an issue until the Land Use Element of the 1964 General Plan is replaced or significantly updated. Maintaining the size and scale of Santa Barbara is a pressing issue as illustrated by some of the large buildings that have been built or are being proposed for Santa Barbara and the large number of housing units and other proposed developments in the pipeline.

There has been a scarcity of housing in Santa Barbara for more than 130 years and balancing the "need" for affordable housing against maintaining our high quality of life in Santa Barbara is a major issue. There are more than a billion people who would like to live in Santa Barbara, but we do not have the resources to satisfy that desire. We should stop chasing the impossible dream of affordable housing for everybody. I heartily agree with the recent words of at least one council member that "We should not destroy Santa Barbara in the name of affordable housing."

8. RECOGNIZE LARGE VOLUME OF NECESSARY WORK & IMPORTANCE OF AD HOC COMMITTEES, ABLE TO DEVOTE NECESSARY TIME - If appointed to the Planning Commission, I will have the time to serve on ad hoc committees and read numerous staff reports and technical documents.

9. INTEREST IN DESIGN REVIEW & ROLE OF DESIGN REVIEW - I am very interested in design review and know that we have many very talented architects and other design professionals in our community. I do not believe that the role of design review should be to redesign projects. It is the role of a design review board to approve acceptable projects that are consistent with the design guidelines and land use requirements and are compatible with the community. The ABR should say "no" to bad projects and I am confident that our talented design professionals will return with better projects. Architects and other professionals frequently have clients who want and direct their architects and other professionals to design a bad project or do something else that is wrong. If our architects were in a position to tell their clients that something bad would not be approved, they would be in a better position to convince their clients not to pursue bad projects. We do a favor for our architects and other design professionals by denying bad projects.

10. ABR SHOULD ACT BY CONSENSUS - I believe that the ABR should act by consensus, but individual members should be allowed to concisely express different views about projects. I do not believe that the ABR members should spend their time redesigning projects. This would require to ABR to say "no" to bad projects, rather than trying to rework these bad projects.

CONCLUSION

I will have a quick learning curve because I have the knowledge, skills and experience to quickly get up to full speed.

The primary emphasis of planning in Santa Barbara should be to protect and enhance the quality of life of the people who live and own property here and make our lives more comfortable. I have a great deal of experience in reading site, building, floor and landscape plans. I know the various areas, neighborhoods and other elements of Santa Barbara and believe that I can make a positive contribution to our community.

I would be honored to serve the community in a public position.